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Career Official in Charge

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 19 — Robert M. Gates, Acting Director of Central Intelligence since William J. Casey was hospitalized, has been Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency since April. Mr. Gates, who is 43 years old, has served in the agency and as a staff member of the National Security Council for 20 years.

A native of Kansas, Mr. Gates earned a doctoral degree in Russian and Soviet history from Georgetown University here in 1974. After joining the C.I.A. in 1966, he became an adviser at the agency on strategic arms limitation in negotiations in the early 1970's.

In 1974 he moved to the White House, working on the staff of the National Security Council for six years under Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter.

Mr. Gates returned to the intelligence agency in January 1980 and was the agency's national intelligence officer for the Soviet Union for two years. He then became Deputy Director for intelligence, overseeing the analytical branch of the agency. He has never been active in the branch that oversees the agents who carry out covert operations.

Mr. Gates, while Deputy Director of the agency, has also held an assignment as chairman of the National Intelligence Council, directing the preparation of all national intelligence estimates by the C.I.A. These joint assessments are prepared cooperatively by all the intelligence agencies from time to time and cover a variety of topics.

He and his wife, Becky, have two children.

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